THE CARBONDALE (PA.) NEWS, Vol. 109, No. 29, July 22, 1981, p. 1

Industrial expert talks frankly about city's eco

Carbondale will 'die' un

"You're not going to like what I have to say, but you have to face the facts," Major Lee White told the Carbondale Area Chamber of Commerce at their last meeting. He went on to say that unless Carbondale does something to attract new industry, the city will die a natural death.

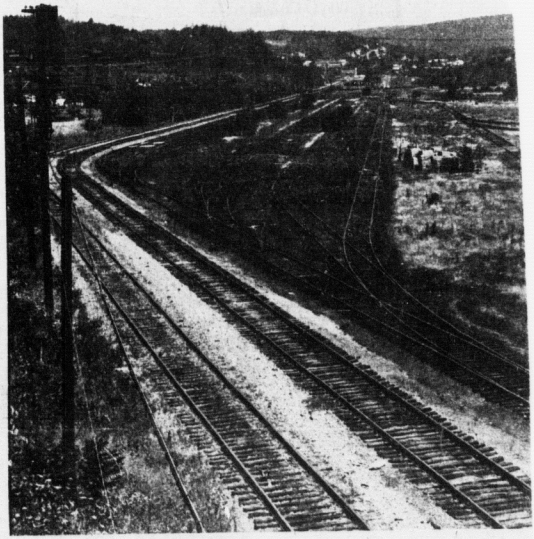
"The most important thing for you to understand," White said, "is that things don't just happen, they're made to happen!"

White and his co-worker John Haran are authorities on industrial development. White is currently the manager of the Midvalley Industrial Park and he has been in the business of recruiting industries for over 25 years. He and Haran, a Pioneer City native, are also intimately familiar with Carbondale and its problems.

Speaking as a member of the Scranton Chamber of Commerce and a key member of the organizations which were formed in the 1950s and 1960s to attract industry to this area, White said, "The lower valley has paid its debt to Carbondale. So if something is going to be done, it's going to be done by the people in this room." He was refering to the fact that the Scranton Chamber of Commerce was instrumental in helping Gentex to expand its plant in Simpson and the fact that the Scranton Chamber has been looking for a new tenant for the Tioga plant on Carbondale's west side. In years past, downvalley people were also instrumental in helping Hendrick Manufacturing relocate, building the Tioga plant, building the Fleetwood Trailer plant building, and attracting other industries to Carbondale, Mayfield, and Jermyn. Now, they feel, it's up to Carbondaleans to help themselves.

White implied that the only people who are working to bring industry to Lackawanna County are people from outside Carbondale. "The problem with Carbondale is that the people are willing to sit on their porch and rock, but do nothing about it," White remarked.

The picture of Carbondale's future which White painted was a gloomy one. He said that the economic climate of Northeastern Pennsylvania has never been worse, adding, "Industrial prospects are so rare these days, it's unbelieveable. And when the rare situation arrives that an industrial prospect does come to the area, what does Carbondale have to offer?"



A FUTURE INDUSTRIAL PARK would turn this empty D&H rail yard back

"The people should be sick to death of the looks of the town!" White continued, "There's no enthusiasm. No pride. You must get pride. You must change your image."

When asked specifically what he disliked about Carbondale's appearance, White answered, "Well, the first thing I think of is City Hall. It's a disgrace. Someone should put a rope around it and pull it down! You have a lot of empty storefronts, but they can be filled if you get the economy turned around."

White then offered a plan of action which he suggested is Carbondale's only hope for attracting new jobs.

The plan is to develop the old D&H railroad yard into an industrial park. The idea had been discussed by Mayor Mancuso and other community leaders including the members of CLIDCO years ago, but White offered some insight which made the concept even more attractive.

According to White, Carbondale is